Title : Regarding situation arising out of shortage of LPG in the Country and steps taken by the Government in regard thereto.

(i) Situation arising out of shortage of LPG in the country and steps

taken by the Government in regard thereto

MR. DEPUTY-SPEAKER: The House will now take up Calling Attention. Prof. Mahadeorao Shiwankar.

PROF. MAHADEORAO SHIWANKAR (CHIMUR): Mr. Deputy-Speaker, Sir, I call the attention of the Minister of Petroleum and Natural Gas to the following matter of urgent public importance and request that he may make a statement thereon:

"The situation arising out of shortage of LPG in the country and steps taken by the Government in regard thereto."

THE MINISTER OF PETROLEUM & NATURAL GAS AND MINISTER OF PANCHAYATI RAJ (SHRI MANI SHANKAR AIYAR): Mr. Deputy-Speaker, with your permission, I lay the statement on the table of the House.

* Sir, LPG requirements are met by a combination of domestic production and imports. A temporary shortage of LPG emerged in September, 2005 on account of various factors. PSU production in the period April-September, 2005 was 303 TMT (Thousand Metric Tonne) less than planned; Reliance Industries Limited (RIL) production was 190 TMT less than planned. In consequence, physical inventories with Oil Marketing Companies (OMCs) declined from 333 TMT at the beginning of April, 2005 to 190 TMT at the beginning of October,

2005. Then, with effect from 4th October, 2005, RIL, the single largest domestic supplier of LPG, shut down their Fluidized Catalytic Cracker (FCC) unit at Jamnagar for maintenance work. Moreover, at just about the same time, as RIL confirmed its shut down effective October, 2005, domestic production prospects were seriously impacted by the fire in Mumbai High North and global LPG supplies became tight, largely on account of the impact of Hurricane Katrina on US refineries. All these factors put together upset the plans made by OMCs to effect imports in time to offset the anticipated shortage in supplies. This fed rumours in the market that OMCs would not be able to meet the demand, leading to a sudden spurt in demand. There was also a strike in bottling plants in the National Capital Territory (NCT) area towards the end of September, 2005 which aggravated the situation.

The Ministry took matters in hand early in October, 2005 when it was decided that through a combination of inventory management and imports, directly handled by a composite task force of the OMCs under the close supervision of the Government, physical shortages of supply would be overcome as quickly as possible. It was also decided that bottling plants in the NCT area would work on Sunday, 9th October and other holidays. On the basis of these decisions, it was announced that the physical shortage in the NCT area would end by Dusshera and substantively in the rest of the country by Deepavali. These objectives have been largely achieved. In addition to the arrangements made earlier by OMCs to import 642 TMT of LPG during the period October-December, 2005, arrangements have been made to import an additional quantity of 237.9 TMT during this period, of which 138 TMT has already reached the country. Thus, the overall physical shortage in the country at present has been reduced to only about 1.5 per cent of the average monthly consumption of LPG. However, the backlog at the micro-level may vary from market to market on account of operational reasons.

The situation is expected to normalize further by the end of November, 2005 on the restoration of production in RIL's refinery. Moreover, while OMCs are striving to ensure supplies to distributors in accordance with the registered customer strength of the distributor, the active cooperation of State Governments is required to cap, reduce and eventually eliminate the diversion of domestic LPG to the black market and unauthorized use which takes place on account of the wide gap between the retail price of LPG for domestic use and the market price for commercial LPG. The Union Government in the Ministry of Petroleum and Natural Gas has alerted State Governments to the imperative need to curtail diversion and other malpractices by enforcing the control orders issued under the Essential Commodities Act, 1955. OMCs have also been directed to ensure adherence to Marketing Discipline Guidelines, 2001.

In view of the temporary LPG shortage, OMCs had restricted the release of new connections effective September, 2005 but, in view of the improvement in the situation, they have accepted the Ministry's request to resume the release of new connections from 1st December, 2005.

प्रो. महादेवराव शिवनकर : माननीय उपाध्यक्ष महोदय, जो स्टेटमैंट पैट्रोलियम मंत्री जी ने दिया है, मुझे लगता है कि उससे मैं और सदन असहमत होगा। उसका प्रमुख कारण है कि स्टेटमैंट में बताया गया है कि शॉर्टैज सितम्बर से है। हम देख रहे हैं कि देश में गैस की शॉर्टेज पिछले सैशन के सम्य से है और उस सम्य भी यह सवाल आया था और आपने बड़े जोश के साथ कहा था कि स्थिति में सुधार हो रहा है जिससे गैस की शॉर्टेज नहीं होगी। हम देख रहे हैं कि इस स्थिति में कोई सुधार नहीं हुआ है। पिछले सैशन के सम्य भी गैस सिलैंडर की कालाबाजारी हो रही थी। गैस सिलैंडर का नहीं मिलना और 600 रुपए तक प्रति गैस सिलैंडर की कीमत जाना ठीक नहीं है। जब से यह इस विभाग के मंत्री बने हैं, तब से लगातार यह स्थिति चल रही है। आप देखेंगे कि इनकी पुरानी आदत परमिट राज लाने की है। इस कारण गैस सिलैंडर मंहगे हुए। विशेष रूप से जो महिलाएं ग्रामीण इलाकों में रहती हैं, इसे लेकर उनकी आंखों में आंसू आ जाते हैं। जो मध्यम वर्ग की महिलाएं हैं, उनका गैस न मिलने की वजह से कई बार सारा बजट अप्सैट हो जाता है। जिस परिवार की आय तीन-चार हजार रुपए मासिक होगी, अगर उसे 600 रुपए गैस सिलैंडर के देने पड़ेंगे, 1/4 देने पड़ेंगे तो उनके घरों में चूल्हा कैसे जलेगा?

मैं आपका ध्यान 17 नवम्बर 2005 के ` राष्ट्रीय सहारा ` की ओर दिलाना चाहता हूं। माननीय पैट्रोलियम मंत्री जी ने कहा कि महिलाएं सौ रुपए साड़ी के कम कर दें। यह एक शर्म की बात है। यह महिलाओं को सलाह दे रहे हैं लेकिन अपने विभाग में सुधार नहीं कर रहे हैं। उन्होंने कहा कि महिलाएं अगर साड़ी के सौ रुपए कम करें तो गैस सिलैंडर पर दी जाने वाली सबसिडी ठीक हो सकती है। ऑल इंडिया डेमोक्रेटिक वूमेन एसोसिएशन ने केन्द्रीय पेट्रोलियम मंत्री श्री मणि शंकर अय्यर द्वारा एल.पी.जी. संकट और तेल की बढ़ती हुई कीमतों से निपटने के लिए दिए गए बयान पर आपत्ति जताई। श्री मणि शंकर अय्यर ने कहा - यदि महिलाएं अपनी साड़ी और फिल्म के बजट में कटौती करके सौ रुपए इधर बढ़ा दें तो एल.पी.जी. का संकट दूर हो सकता है। उन महिलाओं ने इसका निोध किया। इस तरह से गरीबी के संबंध में और आम महिलाओं के संबंध में खिल्ली उड़ाई गई। महिलाओं के आंखों में आंसू हैं, आंसू पोंछने के बजाय माननीय मंत्री महोदय उन्हें तड़पाना चाहते हैं। क्या आप गरीब आदमी को तड़पा-तड़पा कर मारना चाहते हैं। इस संबंध में जब-जब अधिवेशन होता है तब-तब आप छापे डालने की बात कहते हैं। पिछले अधिवेशन काल में इन्होंने कहा हमने यहां छापे डाले, वहां छापे डाले। मेरे पास अन्स्टार्ड क्वेश्चन का जबाब है जिसमें उन्होंने कहा कि परिस्थिति सुधर गई है। जून-जुलाई के अधिवेशन के सम्य भी आपने कहा था कि अब परिस्थिति पूरे कंट्रोल में है। आप अभी भी इस संबंध में कह रहे हैं कि सितंबर से कमी नहीं है। एल.पी.जी की

वस्तुस्थिति ऐसी नहीं है। कोटा, परमिट राज और सब्सिडी इनका मुख्य कारण हैं। आप सब्सिडी देना नहीं चाहते और इस प्रमुख कारण के कारण गैस सिलेंडर की शार्टेज हुई, कालाबाजारी हुई। विशेष रूप से सड़क पर जो ढाबा चलाने वाले लोग हैं, जहां बड़े सिलेंडर हैं, उनको टेक अप नहीं करना चाहते । आज दिल्ली में अखबार में कुछ छपा है क्योंकि यहां पर कॉलिंग अटैंशन है, आप इसे उस ओर डाइवर्ट करना चाहते हैं। इस तरह से परिस्थिति सुधरने वाली नहीं है। माननीय मंत्री जी विद्वान हैं, बहुत होशियार हैं, शब्दों में माहिर हैं, शब्दों को फेंकने में बहुत माहिर हैं, अब शब्दों के जाल में देश फंसने वाला नहीं है। आपका कर्तव्य है और आप इसे कंट्रोल कीजिए। चेयरमैन का स्टेटमेंट मेरे पास है। उन्होंने निर्णय लिया था जो वर्तमान पेपर में आया हुआ है, उन्होंने कहा कि नए साल तक हम सिलेंडर नहीं देंगे। लेकिन आप कहते हैं कि हम स्थिति सुधारने वाले हैं यानि इस महीने की एक तारीख से स्थिति सुधरने वाली है। वास्तविक रूप से आप इस स्थिति को स्पट करें कि नए साल यानि एक जनवरी के बाद आप नये कनैक्शन देने वाले हैं। आपको क्या पता कि इन नए कनैक्शन के लिए लोग कितना तड़प रहे हैं। परिवार बढ़ते हैं, शादियां होती हैं, परिवार का विघटन होता है और छोटे-छोटे परिवार हो जाते हैं। ऐसी स्थिति में नए कनैक्शन का नहीं होना कितनी दिक्कत की बात है, यह आप समझ सकते हैं। लेकिन माननीय मंत्री महोदय को इस बात का काई खयाल नहीं है। क्या इस एक तारीख से यानि कल से नए कनैक्शन के सिलेंडर देना चाहेंगे? क्या आप यह घोषित करना चाहेंगे कि पर्याप्त रूप में नए सिलेंडर मिलेंगे? एन.डी.ए सरकार के काल में इमिडियएटली लोग कंधे पर सिलेंडर ले जाते थे जब भाई-भाई में झगड़ा होता था, दूसरा परिवार दूसरी जगह झोंपड़ी में जाकर बसता था तो कंधे पर सिलेंडर ले जाता था और चूल्हे में आग लगाता था। इन्होंने तो चूल्हे को आग लगाई है। अब स्थिति यह आ गई है कि जलते हुए चूल्हे की आग में यह सरकार भस्म हो गई है और स्वाह हो गई है। इसलिए मैं चेतावनी देना चाहता हूं और आग्रह करना चाहता हूं कि देश में इस परिस्थिति को सुधारिए। अगर आप इस परिस्थिति को नहीं सुधार पाए तो जनता आपको माफ नहीं करेगी। यह सब आपकी पॉलिसी के कारण हुआ है और इस अर्थ नीति का निर्माण हुआ है। आपने जो पॉलिसी लादी, कोटा निर्धारित किया और परमिट निर्धारित किया, उसके कारण इस परिस्थिति का निर्माण हुआ। अगर पर्याप्त रूप में आवश्यकता पड़े तो गैस सिलेंडर आयात कीजिए। किसी ने आयात करने के लिए नहीं रोका है क्योंकि वैसे भी आप आयात करते हैं। केवल सब्सिडी नहीं देने की नीति के कारण, इस नीति का परिणाम यह हो रहा है कि हजारों लोगों के घरों में चूल्हे नहीं जल पा रहे हैं। मैं पूछना चाहूंगा कि क्या आप इस स्टेटमेंट में सुधार करेंगे? क्या स्थिति में सुधार करेंगे? क्या आने वाली परिस्थिति में सुधार करेंगे? दीवाली के समय आपने सिलेंडर नहीं दिया, दशहरे के समय आपने सिलेंडर नहीं दिया, त्यौहार के समय सिलेंडर नहीं दिया, लेकिन कम से कम क्रिसमस के समय यानि 25 तारीख को आप सिलेंडर की व्यवस्था करेंगे या नहीं? मेरा आपसे यह सवाल है।

माननीय उपाध्यक्ष महोदय, मैं स्पैसिफिक प्रश्न यह पूछना चाहता हूं कि माननीय मंत्री जी इस स्टेटमेंट के बाद क्या करने वाले हैं, क्या वह पौलिसी में सुधार करने वाले हैं, क्या सिलेंडर की कीमत कम करने जा रहे हैं? आज तो यह कीमत बढ़ रही है लेकिन काला बाजार में जो दाम बढ़ते हैं, उस पर किस तरह से कंट्रोल करने वाले हैं। मैं आपके माध्यम से माननीय मंत्री जी इन सवालों के जवाब चाहता हूं।

MR. DEPUTY-SPEAKER: Shri Rupchand Pal, please seek clarifications.

SHRI RUPCHAND PAL (HOOGHLY): Sir, in the Statement given by the hon. Minister, it is said that several factors are responsible.

उपाध्यक्ष महोदय : लम्बी स्पीच नहीं करनी है, केवल क्वैश्चन पुट करना है।

Shri Rupchand Pal, I request you to put specific questions and not to make a speech.

SHRI RUPCHAND PAL : I shall ask specific questions. Just I am framing the questions.

In the Statement, the hon. Minister has mentioned about several factors. There was less production by the PSUs and less production by RIL, the biggest supplier. There are many other factors which he has mentioned. What I want to know is this. If the Government anticipated its shortage, what was the quantum of shortage that had been anticipated? I am asking this because in our country 5.5 crore LPG cylinders are being used in a month. It was anticipated by various others that there was going to be an acute shortage to the tune of 40 lakh to 50 lakh cylinders but the Government did not take any steps. Instead, the Government ordered to check its diversion. The diversion from subsidised LPG meant for the domestic consumption to the commercial sector such as eating establishments, automobiles, etc. is always there. The black-marketing is always there. Still the Government has issued this Order. I want to know why the Order was timed at such a time? Was there any special with regard to the diversion? Restriction in the number of refill available with the LPG distributors to the customer base in his area, ceiling, stoppage of new connections − all these created the crisis. In a situation of crisis, black-marketing and diversion would always thrive. What was the rationale behind this Order? What was the new thing in the situation? They admitted the failure of the mechanism to stop diversion.

I come to my last question. The Government took the decision for import when they knew that internationally the shortage crisis was there following the US Rita Katrina hurricane, hike in the freight rates, non-availability of ships and the channels. In such a situation, the PSUs were grumbling that they had to bear heavy loss for the subsidy. In such a situation, why did the Government come out with such an Order? Was it under the pressure from the concerned bodies who were grumbling for the heavy loss or to cater to some other need? Otherwise, they knew fully well that there is going to be shortage, there has been diversion, and there has been black-marketing. There was a mechanism which was to be reviewed and rectified. But the Government came out with the Order which only created more crisis than solving it. This is my point. Why did the Government do that?

MR. DEPUTY-SPEAKER: Shri Sudhangshu Seal, you only seek clarifications.

SHRI SUDHANGSHU SEAL (CALCUTTA-NORTH WEST): Hon. Deputy-Speaker, Sir, the hon. Minister, in his Statement, has stated that the black- marketeers would be dealt with firmly.

So, within this period, how many cases have been recorded in his Department? Secondly, there is a very big complaint that the weight the consumer is supposed to get they are not getting. They are getting less weight. There

is a very big racket by some people who are playing all these games. So, what action the Government is going to take against them? It is because the fellow consumers are suffering for quite a long time.

Thirdly, the LPG cylinders meant for domestic use are being used by the Dhabas, restaurants and all these people. So, in his statement he has stated that regular checking and monitoring has been done but I doubt whether it has been really done or not. It is because still we notice that all these Dhabas and restaurants are using freely the cylinders. We do not know and we do not find any reason as to where from they are getting these supplies. So, there must be a racket between the distributors and all these big consumers resulting in serious sufferings of the consumers. So, I would like to know from the hon. Minister what action his Department has taken against this.

MR. DEPUTY-SPEAKER: Now, Yogi Aditya Nath, you raise only clarification.

योगी आदित्यनाथ (गोरखपुर) : उपाध्यक्ष महोदय, जब से यू.पी.ए. की सरकार केन्द्र में हैं, इस सरकार की तब से नीयत ही ठीक नहीं है तो नीति कैसे ठीक होगी। पिछले डेढ़ वर्षों में â€¦ (व्यवधान)

SHRI VARKALA RADHAKRISHNAN (CHIRAYINKIL): I am on a point of order.

MR. DEPUTY-SPEAKER: Under what rule?

SHRI VARKALA RADHAKRISHNAN : I am only referring to the point.

MR. DEPUTY-SPEAKER: No, please sit down.

SHRI VARKALA RADHAKRISHNAN : As per rules, a Member cannot give two Calling Attention notices at the same time on the same day. Now he is raising two Calling Attention motions.

MR. DEPUTY-SPEAKER: Please sit down. It is not to be recorded.

(Interruptions) â€¦*

उपाध्यक्ष महोदय : आप बैठ जाइये, आपकी बात रिकार्ड पर नहीं जायेगी।

*(Interruptions) *â€¦*

उपाध्यक्ष महोदय : आपकी बात रिकार्ड पर नहीं जा रही है।

(Interruptions) â€¦*

योगी आदित्यनाथ : यह जनहित से संबंधित मामला है, आप बैठियेâ€¦ (व्यवधान) जनहित से जुड़े मामलों को एक बार नहीं दस बार यहां रखा जा सकता है। यह स्पीकर साहब तय करेंगे, बी.ए.सी. तय करेगी, आप कैसे तय करेंगे? आपको यह अधिकार किसने दिया है?â€¦ (व्यवधान)

MR. DEPUTY-SPEAKER: Please listen to me.

...(*Interruptions*)

MR. DEPUTY-SPEAKER: Please listen to me. This Calling Attention has been raised by Prof. Mahadeorao Shiwankar and not by Yogi Aditya Nath. This was not raised by Yogi Aditya Nath.

...(*Interruptions*)

योगी आदित्यनाथ : जब वामपंथियों का नम्बर होता है तो आप चुप क्यों बैठते हैं?

प्रो. महादेवराव शिवनकर : उन्होंने परमीशन दी है, फिर आप क्यों बोल रहे हैं?

MR. DEPUTY-SPEAKER: Please sit down.

...(*Interruptions*)

SHRI TARIT BARAN TOPDAR (BARRACKPORE): He was raising an issue of rule. It is a very important point. There is a hue and cry.

---

* Not Recorded.

MR. DEPUTY-SPEAKER: No, there is no hue and cry. I have heard him. I have given my ruling.

Now, Yogi Aditya Nath can speak.

...(*Interruptions*)

PROF. MAHADEORAO SHIWANKAR : The permission is given by the Chair. He has given the permission. He has announced his name. The Chair has given the permission.

MR. DEPUTY-SPEAKER: Please sit down.

...(*Interruptions*)

SHRI TARIT BARAN TOPDAR : He has raised a point of order on a very valid ground.

YOGI ADITYA NATH : What is the point? There is no point.

MR. DEPUTY-SPEAKER: Please sit down.

...(*Interruptions*)

MR. DEPUTY-SPEAKER: Nothing should be recorded.

(Interruptions) â€¦*

प्रो. महादेवराव शिवनकर : चेयर के डिसीज़न पर कोई पॉइंट ऑफ ऑर्डर नहीं हो सकता है। â€¦ (व्यवधान)

योगी आदित्यनाथ : महोदय, मैं कह रहा था कि जब नीयत ठीक न हो तो नीति कैसे ठीक होगी? â€¦ (व्यवधान)

SHRI VARKALA RADHAKRISHNAN : It must be corrected. It should not be repeated. It will make a precedent....(*Interruptions*)

SHRI TARIT BARAN TOPDAR : It is not that. Rule book should be adhered to. ...(*Interruptions*)

MR. DEPUTY-SPEAKER: I have allowed him to speak.

...(*Interruptions*)

MR.DEPUTY- SPEAKER: I have given the ruling. Please sit down.

...(*Interruptions*)

---

* Not Recorded.

PROF. MAHADEORAO SHIWANKAR : He is challenging the Chair. ...(*Interruptions*)

MR. DEPUTY-SPEAKER: Aditya*ji*, you please speak.

...(*Interruptions*)

योगी आदित्यनाथ : पिछले डेढ़ वर्षों में एल.पी.जी. सिलैन्डर के दामों में लगभग 50 रुपये की वृद्धि इस सरकार ने की है। इस सरकार की नीतियां आम उपभोक्ताओं को परेशान करने वाली और कालाबाज़ारियों को संरक्षण देने वाली हैं। â€¦ (व्यवधान)

SHRI MADHUSUDAN MISTRY (SABARKANTHA): What is the question? He is supposed to ask question....(*Interruptions*)

योगी आदित्यनाथ : आप त्य नहीं करेंगे। आप बैठिये। â€¦ (व्यवधान)

MR. DEPUTY-SPEAKER: You are not to decide. I will decide. Please sit down.

...(*Interruptions*)

योगी आदित्यनाथ : आप त्य नहीं करेंगे कि कौन प्रश्न करेगा, कौन नहीं करेगा। आप चुपचाप बैठिये। â€¦ (व्यवधान) यह चेयर त्य करेगी। â€¦ (व्यवधान)

SHRI SUNIL KHAN (DURGAPUR): He has used unparliamentary words too....(*Interruptions*)

SHRI SWADESH CHAKRABORTTY (HOWRAH): It should be expunged....(*Interruptions*)

योगी आदित्यनाथ : उपाध्यक्ष महोदय, दो बातें बहुत तेजी के साथ सामने आई हैं और माननीय मंत्री जी ने जो स्टेटमैंट दिया है, उसमें भी उनका ज़िक्र नहीं किया गया है। एक बात मैं माननीय मंत्री जी से जानना चाहता हूं कि क्या मंत्रालय ने एल.पी.जी. का क्वोटा आधा किया है? सामान्य रूप से एक परिवार को जो एल.पी.जी. का एक सिलैन्डर मिलता था, वह एन.डी.ए. की सरकार के समय में 15-20 दिन में मिलता था। â€¦ (व्यवधान) इस सरकार ने तय किया है â€¦ (व्यवधान) अगर मुझे इसी प्रकार से वामपंथी डिस्टर्ब करेंगे तो हम लोग भी इनको नहीं बोलने देंगे। अगर सदन की व्यवस्था इसी प्रकार से चलनी है तो हम भी जानते हैं कि कैसे अव्यवस्था फैलाई जाती है। इन्से ज्यादा अच्छी तरह से हम इनको जवाब देना जानते हैं। उपाध्यक्ष जी, आप इनको चुप कराइए। â€¦ (व्यवधान)

MR. DEPUTY-SPEAKER: No, you please sit down.

...(*Interruptions*)

योगी आदित्यनाथ : महोदय, इस प्रकार के .â€¦.*

जब यहां पर आ जाते हैं तो ये लोग इस प्रकार की अव्यवस्था फैलाने का काम करते हैं। इन लोगों को सुसंस्कृत करने की आवश्यकता है। इनको इस मामले में निर्देशित किया जाए। â€¦ (व्यवधान)

श्री पवन कुमार बंसल (चण्डीगढ़) : महोदय, इनका यह कहना आपत्तिजनक है। â€¦ (व्यवधान)

योगी आदित्यनाथ : हाँ, मैंने कहा है। â€¦ (व्यवधान)

श्री सुनील खां : आप साधु को एल.पी.जी. सिलैन्डर की क्या जरूरत है? â€¦ (व्यवधान)

योगी आदित्यनाथ : .â€¦.* भारत की परंपराओं के बारे में तुम्हें ज्ञान नहीं हो सकता है। भारत के बारे में तुम नहीं जान सकते हो। â€¦ (व्यवधान)

MR. DEPUTY-SPEAKER: I will see to it. If there is any objectionable that I will expunge.

...(*Interruptions*)

MR. DEPUTY-SPEAKER: Without any advise, I have already said that I will see.

...(*Interruptions*)

MR. DEPUTY-SPEAKER: This is not to be recorded except Shri Yogi.

*(Interruptions)*** â€¦

योगी आदित्यनाथ : महोदय, दो बातें सामने आई हैं। जैसा कि मैंने पहले भी कहा है कि एनडीए की सरकार ने तय किया था कि एक परिवार को गैस सिलेंडर 15 से 20 दिन की अवधि में उपलब्ध कराया जाएगा, लेकिन इस सरकार ने उस अवधि को बढ़ा कर लगभग 40 दिन कर दिया है। मैं माननीय मंत्री जी से जानना चाहूंगा कि क्या यह सही है?

इस प्रश्न का दूसरा पार्ट यह है कि क्या मंत्रालय ने विभिन्न गैस कंपनियों को आदेशित किया है कि जो सब्सीडी इससे पहले गैस सिलेंडर पर सरकार वहन करती थी, उस सब्सीडी को सरकार वापस ले और गैस कंपनियों को बाध्य किया है कि इस सब्सीडी को वहन करे। इस कारण गैस कंपिन्यां गैस सिलेंडर समय पर उपलब्ध नहीं करा पा रही हैं। वर्तमान में एलपीजी घरेलू उप्योग की गैस में किल्लत आ रही है, यह उसका प्रमुख कारण है। मैं माननीय मंत्री जी से इन दो बिंदुओं के बारे में जानना चाहता हूं।

---

* Expunged as ordered by the Chair.

** Not Recorded.

*m07

SHRI BASU DEB ACHARIA : Sir, this question was raised in this House in the last Session also. While replying to the question raised by us, the hon. Minister of Petroleum and Natural Gas had said in the end:

> "It is necessary for my Ministry to monitor the situation as well and I have to come back to the House by the next Session with a clarification as to what further is being done in this regard."

I would like to know the steps taken by the Ministry as he assured the House when this question was raised. At that point of time in the month of August, the crisis was confined to only three to four States. Today, there is an acute crisis all over the country. This is because of unforeseen shutdown of certain refineries. They had allowed them to reduce production. When there is a peak demand, during the festive season, they had reduced the production. Some of the refineries, both in the public and the private sectors reduced their production in September, 2005. This was coupled with the planned shutdown of 45 days.

The hon. Minister has also in his statement stated that in the private refinery at Jamnagar, there was a shutdown of a unit for maintenance work from October 4, 2005. Such shutdown was always allowed in the past only in the lean

period, not in the peak period. It was allowed only from February to April. So, why was such a shutdown and reduction in production allowed when the demand for LPG was growing?

The idea of regulating supplies to the consumers in the festive season also to suit one company was done. The planned shutdown by a major supplier, Reliance, appears to be a case of misplanned supply management for inescapable reasons, which needs to be investigated. I hope, the hon. Minister would, while replying, clarify the position.

Why had there been a coincidental nature of unforeseen breakdown of LPG producing plants? Why was the peak period chosen to allow the shutdown? He should also clarify the reason for allowing the most unplanned shutdown in October and November, in the peak period. Why did the Government allow that?

There is an acute shortage today also and while replying to the debate, he assured the House that he would take certain concrete measures in regard to diversion of LPG for other purposes. I would like to know what concrete measures the Government has taken within these three months to reduce the diversion of LPG for other purposes.

Today one cylinder of LPG is being sold at Rs. 500/- or even more than Rs. 500/- or Rs. 600/-. So, what concrete measures has the Government taken/ proposed to be taken to curb these malpractices and also the diversion of LPG for other purposes for which it is not meant? ...(*Interruptions*)

SHRI VARKALA RADHAKRISHNAN : Sir, I have given a notice. ...(*Interruptions*)

MR. DEPUTY-SPEAKER: Shri Varkala Radhakrishnan, please take your seat.

...(*Interruptions*)

उपाध्यक्ष महोदय : देखिए, एज पर रूल्स...

...(व्यवधान)

योगी आदित्यनाथ : उपाध्यक्ष महोदय, जब माननीय सदस्य, श्री वरकला राधाकृणन का नोटिस नहीं है, तो उन्हें इस पर बोलने का अवसर भी नहीं मिलना चाहिए क्योंकि सदन में इस प्रकार से उन्हें बोलने का अवसर देकर नई परम्परा प्रारम्भ नहीं करनी चाहिए। â€¦ (व्यवधान)

MR. DEPUTY-SPEAKER: Yogi Aditya Nath, you are not a deciding authority. The Chair has to decide to whom the time is to be given.

...(*Interruptions*)

SHRI VARKALA RADHAKRISHNAN : Sir, as per the rules, I have given a notice. If the Chair allows I can ask a clarificatory question. ...(*Interruptions*) Sir, if you allow me only then I can ask the question. I have not violated any rule. I have given a notice as per the rules. So, if you allow me, I will speak; otherwise I will not speak. ...(*Interruptions*) I have given the notice only after studying the rules. I have studied the rules and given a notice. ...(*Interruptions*) Yogi Aditya Nath, you have done an irregular thing. I have done a regular thing. ...(*Interruptions*)

उपाध्यक्ष महोदय : देखिए, जनरली प्रैक्टिस यह है कि..

...(व्यवधान)

उपाध्यक्ष महोदय : जनरल प्रैक्टिस के बारे में तो आप जानते ही हैं कि जितने नाम लिस्ट में हैं, उनसे ज्यादा लोगों को बोलने की इजाजत नहीं दी जाती है, लेकिन यह सब्जैक्ट ऐसा है, जो सारे देश से संबंधित है इसलिए मैं चाहता हूं कि जिन दो-चार माननीय सदस्यों के नोटिस आए हैं, उन्हें क्लैरीफिकेशन के लिए समय दे दूं। यह इसी शर्त पर होगा जब वे केवल क्लैरीफिकेशन करेंगे। अगर उन्होंने लैक्चर देना शुरू कर दिया, तो मैं उन्हें बीच में ही रोक दूंगा। अतः इस विषय की इम्पौर्टैंस को देखते हुए मैं इस विषय पर कुछ माननीय सदस्यों को, जिनके नोटिस आए हैं, उन्हें क्लैरीफिकेशन पूछने का समय देता हूं।

First of all, I will request Shri N.N. Krishnadas − Not present.

Now, I call Shri Varkala Radhakrishnan.

SHRI VARKALA RADHAKRISHNAN : Sir, with all humility, I submit that I will speak only as per the rules. I have sufficiently given the notice in advance. ...(*Interruptions*)

Now, the LPG shortage is very acute in Southern States. ...(*Interruptions*)

MR. DEPUTY-SPEAKER: In Northern States also.

SHRI VARKALA RADHAKRISHNAN : Yes, Sir, and particularly in my State Kerala. Now, the acute becomes so acute because of the emergence of cars using LPG. ...(*Interruptions*) Yes, automobiles are using LPG instead of petrol.

Pollution can be prevented by using LPG and hence the automobiles have come into the picture. LPG is needed not only for household usage but here we have come across a good number of automobiles coming into the field, including autorickshaws. Quite naturally there will be a shortage. Here, the Government will have to take preventive steps, preventive steps in the sense that there must be some regulation, some regulatory method for giving a fair supply to the consumers, especially the household people and then to automobiles. First priority should go to our women in the household. They want it because the firewood is very costly and it is not available. Previously we were using it. But now it is not available. Most of our women rely on this gas. Cooking can be done only through this process. The demand has increased too much. The demand has not only increased but at the same time the automobiles are also coming into the picture. So, the shortage will become acute.

Incidentally, I may tell you that we were given some coupons in the previous House and we used to issue them for priority allotment. Nowadays you are not doing it. They are not with me now. At any rate, the LPG supply is becoming very very short. I would request the hon. Minister to kindly intervene in the matter and take preventive measures so that there will be no shortage of supply of LPG in the market.

श्री संतोष गंगवार : उपाध्यक्ष महोदय, वैसे तो माननीय मंत्री जी बहुत अच्छा उत्तर देंगे और सब को संतुष्ट कर देंगे, परन्तु एक तथ्य सामने है कि 50 वर्षों में जितने एलपीजी कनैक्शन दिए गए, उतने पिछले छः वर्षों में दिए गए। उसके बाद में लोग पंजीकरण कराना भूल गए और सिलेंडर लोगों के घर पर रिक्शे से खुद जाने लगे। अभी जैसे बसुदेव आचार्य जी कह रहे थे कि शट डाउन प्रत्येक वर्ष होता है, ऐसा नहीं है कि इस वर्ष नहीं हुआ है। उसके बाद त्यौहारों के समय, जैसे पिछले सत्र में माननीय मंत्री जी ने आश्वसन दिया था, जो आज तक पूरा नहीं हुआ है।

उपाध्यक्ष महोदय, मैं केवल इतना कहना चाहूंगा कि दोबारा ऐसा अवसर आए कि लोग पंजीकरण कराना भूल जाएं, क्योंकि अब सांसद भी मांग करने लगे हैं। जैसा मैंने कल आपसे कहा था कि बुकलेट देना शुरु कराएं, क्योंकि लोग हमारे से मांग कर रहे हैं। जैसा योगी आदित्यनाथ जी ने कहा, लगता है कि नीति में कुछ कमी आ गई है। हम आपका उत्तर नहीं चाहते, हम यह चाहते हैं कि घरों में फिर से इस प्रकार से सिलेंडर की मांग न हो, जैसी कि इस समय है। इसके बारे में अगर आप दो लाइन में आश्वासन दें तो वह ज्यादा मायने रखेगा, ऐसा मैं महसूस करता हूं।

SHRI SURESH KURUP : Sir, it has become a common practice that LPG distributors give the gas cylinders illegally to hotels and also to automobile owners and the ultimate sufferers are the household consumers. I would like to know from the hon. Minister whether this has come to his notice and whether any action has been taken against these LPG distributors who are doing this illegally.

SHRI P.C. THOMAS : Sir, because of the shortage, now there is an apprehension that the household LPG connections which have already been given are going to be withdrawn also. I do not know whether that is true or not. In some areas there is an apprehension that under the guise of having two connections in the same house − it is not one person having two connections, but may be several persons having different connections − the household people are now given notices but they are made to surrender one of the connections which they have. They are not legal notices. It may not be that one person is having more than one connection. Is there any rule or regulation that one person should not have more than one connection? Is it legal? I do not think it is legal. But, if it is being done, that must be clarified. As has already been submitted, in several States the shortage is too acute.

In Kerala, the shortage has become very acute. Unless immediate steps are taken, there will be a very big hue and cry. So, I urge upon the Minister to clarify as to what action will be taken in this regard.

SHRI KHARABELA SWAIN : My question to the hon. Minister is this. Is it a fact that the Government is going to allow the oil producing companies like ONGC, GAIL, OIL to sell 25 per cent of their produce as LPG not on the Government determined price but on the market price for non-domestic use? If that be so, is it not a covert way of raising the price of the Government cylinder?

SHRI BRAJA KISHORE TRIPATHY : Now, my State is facing very acute shortage of LPG. Felling of trees is completely banned in my State and in some other parts of our country. That is required for the country. I do not dispute that thing. Where will the people get fuel from when there is shortage of LPG? Why is this happening? The country was flooded with LPG during NDA regime. There was nobody requiring it and Members of Parliament's coupons were not considered necessary. Now, what has happened after the Government has changed? To encourage black-marketing, an artificial shortage has been created. So, what are the steps the Government is taking? People will have to cook their food. If you do not provide them LPG and firewood will not be available to

them as felling of trees is banned, what would be the condition of the people? You must consider that thing. I hope, the hon. Minister will definitely assure this House so that all the people will be ensured supply of LPG.

उपाध्यक्ष महोदय : श्री रासा सिंह रावत - मैंने आपको बिना कहे टाइम दे दिया।

प्रो. रासा सिंह रावत : मान्यवर उपाध्यक्ष महोदय, 22 तारीख को पैट्रोलियम मंत्रालय की संसदीय सलाहकार समिति की बैठक हुई थी, उसमें माननीय मंत्री जी ने सभी माननीय सदस्यों को बड़े विस्तार से जो-जो कठिनाइयों का सामना करना पड़ रहा है, उनसे अवगत कराया। आपने एक बात उस समय कही थी कि एक दिसम्बर से जनता की कठिनाइयों का निराकरण हो जायेगा और नये गैस कनैक्शन का रजिस्ट्रेशन भी प्रारम्भ हो जायेगा और आने वाले 5-10 दिन के अन्दर जनता की कठिवाइयों का सर्वथा निराकरण हो जायेगा। मेरे बहुत से मित्रों ने जिन-जिन बातों का उल्लेख किया है, हम सब उनसे सहमत हैं कि काफी समय से जनता को बड़ी भारी कठिनाई का सामना करना पड़ रहा है। 22 तारीख के बाद हम जब हमारे क्षेत्र में गये, तब भी वही की वही समस्याएं, वही की वही लम्बी लाइनें, वही के वही सिलेण्डरों के लम्बे ढेर

और जगह-जगह खाली लगे हुए सिलेण्डर थे। जब डी.एस.ओ. से पता लगाया तो उसने कहा कि मिट्टी के तेल का कोटा भी कम कर दिया गया है और इसके साथ ही एल.पी.जी. गैस का कोटा भी कम कर दिया गया है। इसलिए हम आपसे स्पट उत्तर चाहते हैं, देश की जनता आपके मुखारविन्द से सुनना चाहती है कि आखिर गैस की समस्या, जो माताओं, बहनों, गृहणियों से और हर घर से सम्बन्धित है, उसका निराकरण हो पाएगा और उसे कब सच्चे अर्थों में क्रियान्वित कर दिया जायेगा, यह मैं जानना चाहता हूं?

MR. DEPUTY-SPEAKER: Now, I would request the hon. Minister to reply.

SHRI MANI SHANKAR AIYAR : Mr. Deputy-Speaker, Sir, I trust I will be given the opportunity to explain in as great detail to the House as I was able to to the Consultative Committee the factual situation with respect to LPG and the steps being taken or contemplated to be taken to improve the situation.

First of all, I must share with the House my own distress which is equal to theirs at the way in which shortages have developed after I spoke in this House in August and said that we were trying to do what we should to restore the situation to normalcy. I would like to come to the point as to why that happened in a moment.

मेरे ख्याल से सबसे बेहतर होगा कि जिस कदर मुझसे सवाल किये गये थे, उनका 1-1 का मैं जवाब देने लगूं तो तब जितने भी मुद्दे यहां उठाये गये हैं, उन सब पर कुछ रोशनी डाली जा सकती है, कुछ स्पटीकरण दिया जा सकता है। मैं माननीय श्री शिवनकर जी के सवालों से और टिप्पणियों से शुरू करना चाहता हूं।

उन्होंने कहा कि जब से मैं मंत्री बना हूं तब से यह किल्लत शुरू हुई है और दिक्कतें शुरू हुई हैं। मैं कहना चाहता हूं कि बहुत हद तक आप जो कहना चाहता हैं, उसको मैं मानता हूं कि वह सही है, लेकिन मैं अन्तरराट्रीय दाम को तय नहीं करता हूं। हकीकत तो यह है कि 2003 के आखिरी क्वार्टर से लेकर मई, 2004 के बाद तक अन्तरराट्रीय दाम बढ़ते चले गए। यहां तक कि मार्च 2004 में दो सौ रूपये से भी कम था अब वह आठ सौ रूपये तक पहुंचा हुआ है। थोड़ा-बहुत अब कम हुआ है। मुझे नहीं लगता है कि परिवर्तन का मूल कारण यह है कि राम नाइक जी गए और मणिशंकर जी आए। इसका मूला कारण यह है कि जिन अन्तरराट्रीय परिस्थितियों में एनडीए की सरकार ने कुछ नीतियों को तय किया था, उन अन्तरराट्रीय परिस्थितियों में इतना बड़ा परिवर्तन आया है। लाज़िमी है कि उन नीतियों में हमें कुछ परिवर्तन लाने की आवश्यकता है। हमारी नीयत और नीति में कोई कमी नहीं है, बल्कि अन्तरराट्रीय परिस्थिति में

एक चमत्कार-सा हो रहा है, जिसकी किसी ने कल्पना भी नहीं की थी कि दाम इस तरह से बढ़ते ही चले जाएंगे और वह भी बिना वजह। साथ ही साथ जो पैट्रोलियम पदार्थों का दाम तेल से भी ज्यादा तेज़ी से बढ़ता गया है। इस नई परिस्थिति में हम चुनौती का मुकाबला कर रहे हैं। अब बताया जाता है कि हमें सबक सीखने की जरूरत है। जब एनडीए का दौर था, जो पूछता था, उसको मिलता था, लेकिन जब से सरकार बदली है, उसके मिलने में बड़ी दिक्कत आ रही है।

मैं कुछ आंकड़ों के साथ शुरू करना चाहता हूं कि एलपीजी के नये कनैक्शन एनडीए के दौर में कितने दिए गए और अब हमारे दौर में कितने दिए जा रहे हैं? 1 अप्रैल, 2001 से लेकर अक्तूबर, 2003 के मध्य तक एनडीए सरकार ने 158 लाख नये कनैक्शन उपलब्ध कराए। I want to repeat this in English, if you do not mind, that in the two-and-a-half year period, from the 1st of April, 2001 to October, 2003, the NDA Government made available 158 lakh new connections. As far as we are concerned, between the time I took over and October, 2005, we have delivered 100 lakh connections. The performance of the NDA Government in two-and-a-half years has been matched by my Government in one-and-a-half years and yet, it is repeatedly being said, completely untruly, that we are attempting deliberately to wipe the smile of our *Griha Lakshmi*....(*Interruptions*)

महोदय, गंगवार साहब मेरे ही मंत्रालय से जुड़े थे, यदि उनके पास कुछ ऐसे आंकड़े या तथ्य हैं जिनको कि इसके विरोध में कुछ साबित करते हैं तो मैं सुनने को तैयार हूं। इनके समय में यह इतने अक्षम थे कि इनको 158 लाख कनैक्शन देने में ढाई साल लगे। माफ कीजिए, मैं अपनी तारीफ कर रहा हूं, मैं इतना सक्षम हूं कि 100 लाख कनैक्शन देने में मुझे डेढ़ साल लगे। ...(व्यवधान)

श्री संतोष गंगवार : आपने दो वर्षों में कितने कनैक्शन दिए, वह बताइए।â€¦(व्यवधान)

आप सन् 1999 और 2000 की फिगर्स बता दें, कौन सक्षम है और कौन अक्षम है, यह पता लग जाएगा।â€¦(व्यवधान)

श्री मणि शंकर अय्यर : मैं 1999 के आंकड़े नहीं दूंगा। गंगवार साहब इस सदन को उससे अवगत कराएं क्योंकि वह उनका दौर था। मैंने देश के सामने यह आंकड़ा रखा है कि उन्होंने ढाई साल में जो काम किया, वह हमने डेढ़ साल में किया और वह भी उस परिस्थिति में, जबकि हमारे लिए वह करना बहुत मुश्किल था।

शिवनकर साहब बताते हैं, वे या मुझे सुझाव दे रहे हैं या चुनौती दे रहे हैं या क्या पता धमकी दे रहे हैं। उन्होंने हमें बताया कि हम सावधान रहें क्योंकि अगर हमने इस परिस्थिति को नहीं सुधारा तो जनता हमें माफ नहीं करेगी। जनता ने तो आपको माफ नहीं किया, इसीलिए हम यहां बैठे हैं और आप वहां बैठे हैं।â€¦(व्यवधान) अच्छा, इसका मतलब एलपीजी बिहार में नहीं मिल रहा बाकी पूरे देश में मिल रहा है। जब आपका इंडिया शाइनिंग हो रहा था जबकि एलपीजी बहुत उज्ज्वल हो रहा था, तब जाकर इस देश की जनता ने आपको सही सजा दी। जनता हमें यहां लाई और हम अपना काम कर रहे हैं। आप एक-दो जगह जीत लेंगे तो मैं आपको मुबारकबाद देता हूं, लेकिन खुदा के वास्ते हमें मत बताइए कि हमें क्या करना है क्योंकि हम आपसे बेहतर वह काम करना जानते हैं और हमने वह करके दिखा दिया है।â€¦(व्य

वधान)

MR. DEPUTY-SPEAKER: Mr. Minister, please address the Chair and not the individual Members.

श्री मणि ्शंकर अ्य्यर : माफ कीजिए।

Mr. Deputy-Speaker, Sir, I now come to the points made by Shri Rupchand Pal. I have been very grateful that I have succeeded in bringing the Right and the Left together in this Calling Attention Motion. There has been a kind of a *'milibhagat'* between the Communists and our right wing friends. I am glad that I have brought all of them together. But let me now come to the points made by Comrade Rupchand Pal.

First he asks, 'Why did Government not anticipate the shortage? Why did Government not take the appropriate decision with regard to imports?' Now, when Rupchandji becomes the Prime Minister of this country - and I hope he makes me his Petroleum Minister - we could perhaps reverse the present situation where it is not the Government which anticipates shortage, and it is not the Government which takes decisions with respect to imports but *Navaratnas, the* OMCs. That is the position which I have inherited, and the job of the Government is to keep an eye on *Navaratnas* who have been given full autonomy to take commercial decisions.

I do find a certain contradiction between the principle of total autonomy to public sector undertakings and responsibility for the Minister of Petroleum for even minor nano-matters of management. It is a Constitutional conundrum which was raised in the Joint Parliamentary Committee of which both Shri Rupchand Pal and I were members, and which has still not been resolved. It is something to which I would request the entire House to give attention. How can I allow the commercial companies under me to have full autonomy, and at the same time exercise a kind of authority over them to tell them what they should anticipate and what steps they should take to forestall shortages from developing?

Nevertheless, I would like to clarify, with this little semantic difference, that the oil marketing companies did in fact very carefully plan for what would be the output in the year 2005-06 in comparison to what would be the output in the year 2004-05.

15.00 hrs.

Right at the beginning they anticipated that in this year there was going to be a reduction in output of LPG of the order of 0.4 million tonnes. This was based upon a notice that we have received from the principal producer of LPG in the country, which is the private sector refiner, whose name Comrade Acharia takes with some difficulty. I refer to Reliance Industries Limited. The Reliance Refinery has the exceptionally important role to play with respect to LPG production, and therefore, when we were notified by them last year itself - I am referring to the last calendar year itself - that they were likely to have to take a shut down for their FCC unit, this was anticipated and the period indicated by them was taken into account while anticipating the total production and therefore, planning the required amount of imports, arrangements were made to make up for the shortfall in domestic production with imports from abroad. What however was not foreseen at that time was the repeated postponements that took place in the closure of the RIL refinery. Ultimately, they closed it on the 4th of October, and not much earlier in the year as we had earlier hoped, and instead of shut down lasting for 45-50 days, in actual fact it has gone on, as per my latest information, till today. But we can expect the full resumption in about two day's time. This is what I am told. So, there was not only a pushing forward into the year of the shut down, the shut down has lasted a little longer than they had been in a schedule expected. One of the unfortunate consequence of the postponement of the earlier plan for the shut down has been that it started literally in the week of the Poojas and has continued beyond Deepawali, beyond Eid, beyond Guru Govind Singh's Birthday till now. I was very pleased when I was asked to ensure by the BJP benches that by Christmas our Christians would be able to get the LPG they require. In the spirit of true secularism, we are doing very best to ensure that everyone gets the LPG they require.

But the RIL closing down was not by any means unusal, they only closed down. Quite correctly as hon. Member said, I think, it was Shri Gangwar, who has experienced this matter that there is nothing unusual in shutting downs taking place. There is nothing unusual either in some of these being planned and some of these being unplanned. Therefore, there is on the part of our OMC, on the basis of that experience, the habit of planning to import perhaps a little bit more than they strictly need but there are limitations to be able to do this on a very ostentatious scale for there are capacity limitations in ports; there are capacity limitations in storage. So, one has to plan to import bearing in mind that the flexibility available for receiving and storing in India is really somewhat limited. Within this parameter, some arrangements have been made. What I think had not been properly factored into the situation was the severe way in which production would dip in the public sector refineries and to some extent in the private sector as well during the months of April to May, and then on to September.

The consequence of this is that we have a total shortfall of production as compared to the planned production for the period of April to December 2005 of the order of 729 thousand metric tonnes which means approximately 7.3 lakhs metric tonnes. About half of this is accounted for by shortfalls in PSU production, the exact figure being 393 thousand metric tonnes or 3.9 metric tonnes and the shortfall on RIL's account being of the order of 3.36 lakhs metric tonnes. So, it is this cumulative shortfall in production which is being reflected in the market because certain specific difficulties arose which not even Comrade Acharia could have anticipated in August for Karl Marx did not tell us that Hurricane Katrina was going to hit the US coast. It closed down 14 refineries. We received the final notice from RIL to say that they would close down in October, after we had begged and pleaded with them not to do so. They said that for technical reasons they had to do that. We received a notice from them in the month of August. My friend Comrade Acharia would well remember that it was in that very same month of August that Hurricane Katrina hit the Southern Coast of the United States. There were at least 14 major refineries affected. There is LPG usage in the United States, not perhaps for cooking as much as it is in India, but for other uses. Our traditional suppliers started diverting supplies in that direction because market prices for supplies to the United States rose well beyond what we could ourselves afford. There were several tenders put out by the IOC which were simply not responded to. Then we had to put out others to which we got some partial response. I am very glad to say that we have been able to import, we have planned to import about 238 thousand metric tonnes in addition to whatever was planned earlier in this period of October to December. I understand that well over 116 TMT has been received. I think, the latest figure is in the region of 138 TMT.

Where, I think, in my opinion, had I been an oil sector honcho instead of merely being a poor Minister, I would have drawn down inventories much quicker but it is a part of the professional expertise of oil marketing companies that you do

not draw down inventories, if you possibly can, below about a week's stock. It is getting dangerously close to that. This can be illustrated by a small set of figures that I have. With the opening of the physical inventory of LPG with our oil marketing companies was as high as 333 thousand metric tonnes, that is, 3.3 lakh metric tonnes at the beginning of April and at the beginning of December now, it is down to 150. It is down to half of what we were holding. So, you can see that the instructions that I had to give ultimately, notwithstanding the principle of commercial autonomy that we must have a combination of import management and inventory management to make supplies available and to do this at an industry level by a composite task force of the marketing directors of all the oil marketing companies reporting back to the Government almost on a daily basis, has resulted in our having been able to reduce the physical shortage in this country. I am talking at a macro level to the whole market. The physical shortage in India today is approximately one and a half per cent of the average monthly turnover.

Now, that is not a very large physical shortage; which is why I have proudly claimed in my paper, in the Statement that I circulated, that we do not have to wait for Christmas to get rid of oil shortages. I hope, we will get rid of this 1.5 per cent by then. Substantially, in the National Capital Territory area we did eliminate the physical shortage by Dussehra as I had promised, by working all our plants in and around Delhi even on Sunday, the 9th of October, and that in the country as a whole we were so substantively able to reduce the shortage as to embolden me to put out a letter to the people of India through advertisements in almost all the major newspapers of this country wishing them a very, very Happy Diwali because we had succeeded at a macro level in reducing our physical shortage to a bearable amount.

Now, it is entirely possible that there would be somewhat larger shortages in particular markets given the fact that we have got several thousands LPG distributors and that they are operating in a wide variety of localities. Obviously I cannot correct it unless I am informed. We need a grievance redressal machinery which will alert our oil marketing companies. I started doing it under the *Jan Kerosene Pariyojna* with the local Panchayat bodies. But I do appeal to all sections of the House that there are facilities available in every distributors' office to record the complaint about what is not being done. This is a point that I need to stress to Comrade Rupchand Pal and to many others who spoke on this Calling Attention Motion that our problems are compounded by the massive incentive to diversion which is occurring on account of the wide and growing disparities between the control price at which we are trying to make available domestic LPG and the price at which it is made available commercially.

Sir, I think, this House needs to know and reflect upon the fact that with every cylinder of LPG which we distributed for domestic use in the month of October, 2005, we were, in effect, handing out a cheque of Rs. 198 to the housewife who bought the cylinder -- I am talking about the 14.2 kilogram cylinder, not the double bottle connection -- and the average for the period from April to October, because these prices kept fluctuating, was of the order of Rs. 147. Now, India is shining. At least, it is shining. Incomes are going up. We have subsidised domestic LPG

being given as much to Mrs. Mukesh Ambani as to somebody well below the BPL. It is in these circumstances that I suggested that if there was a very marginal saving in household expenditure, it so happened that I was asked about the ladies. So, I referred to the possibility. I made a quick calculation at that time that perhaps a *saree* costs Rs. 1,200, and Rs. 100 a month would have amounted to Rs. 1,200 per year. But if a gentleman had come and asked me, I would just have said 'why do you buy a trouser? You should put on *dhoti* because it is less expensive.

The point simply is that we have to ask ourselves: Is this subsidy we are giving to absolutely everybody for the use of LPG, a justified subsidy at a time when international prices are rising and LPG is the only petroleum product which we are importing in substantial quantities? Approximately, a quarter of our domestic use of LPG comes from imported LPG.

I am not giving you an answer to my own question. I am merely posing the question as a joke. On the occasion when comrade Acharia raised this matter in this House in the last Session, I did ask him whether his was a Party of the proletariat or a Party of bourgeoisie because consumers of LPG largely belong to bourgeoisie.

SHRI AJOY CHAKRABORTY (BASIRHAT): It is not a fact.

SHRI MANI SHANKAR AIYAR: I did not say entirely.

MR. DEPUTY-SPEAKER: Except the speech of the Minister nothing else is to be recorded.

(Interruptions) â€¦*

SHRI MANI SHANKAR AIYAR: The fact of the matter is whether the consumer belongs to the highest income group or to the lowest income group, the price at which domestic LPG is made available to that consumer remains exactly the same. All I have asked for is reflection on this point. In these circumstances, the incentive to divert considerably increases. It is not an incentive. It is not a reaction which I approve of. On moral ground, I think it is completely wrong that anybody who is running a *dhaba* or a restaurant should pick up a domestic LPG cylinder and take it there. I think it is dangerous not just immoral for somebody whose motor car or auto rickshaw is not properly fitted for the use of LPG cylinder, to fix an LPG cylinder. It literally threatens the lives of those who will be travelling in that vehicle. But whose job is it to identify and stop this?

---

* Not Recorded.

In so far as inspections are concerned, and I am making this statement in the context of the recent killing of Shri Manjunath, the House I hope will congratulate me although I am not sure that their generosity will extend to doing so.

SHRI AJOY CHAKRABORTY : It depends on the supply of LPG.

SHRI MANI SHANKAR AIYAR: Can you please listen to me a minute Ajoy Bhai. In April-October 2004, the total number of cylinders which my people, that is the oil company inspectors, found diverted was 4,470. In April-October, 2005 we had discovered the diversion of 53,687 cylinders. Please do not tell me that we are not doing our work. We have done our work but that lot did not indulge in many inspections. Had they done, perhaps diversion was not on such a big scale because the price differential between the domestic and commercial cylinder was not so great. But the fact of the matter is that our inspections have significantly increased. We have increased the number of inspections to close on 18,000. The number of irregularities detected has increased from 163 in April-October 2004 period to 508 now. We have discovered more than double the cases of diversion; from 122 to 271. You can see where we have doubled the number of identified cases of diversion, we have increased by nearly 12 times the number of cylinders detected as having been diverted. So, we are trying to do what we can.

SHRI SURESH KURUP : I would like to know what action has been taken.

SHRI MANI SHANKAR AIYAR: Action to be taken against the distributors involves invoking the provisions of the marketing disciplinary guidelines as far as we are concerned. But much more important is the action that the State Governments are required to take and in saying this, I am not taking a dig at the CPI(M) Government in West Bengal or the Congress Government in Kerala. I am referring to all the State Governments. We have put LPG under the definition of essential commodities and anyone found using an LPG cylinder for other than domestic purposes, the person is liable for imprisonment even up to seven years.

But I cannot put people into jail. I cannot, even, file an FIR against an individual in some State. Law and order is a State responsibility and we have repeatedly asked the State Governments to step up their activities with regard to what is happening with the diversion of cylinders. So, we do need, in this regard, two hands to clap − first is the

problem of the distributors selling domestic-use cylinders for commercial purposes. But unless you find the person who is using it commercially, or using it for unauthorised purposes, it is difficult...(*Interruptions*)

कुँवर मान्वेन्द्र ्सिंह (मथुरा) : उपाध्यक्ष जी, माननी्य मंत्री जी ्सजा की ्बात कह रहे हैं, लेकिन जितने ्भी गै्स के डील्र्स हैं जो ्सिलेंड्र्स दे रहे हैं होटल ्वालों को, मिठाई ्वालों को ्या अन्य ्स्टेब्लि्शमेंट को, ्वहां एक ्भी छापा नहीं प्ड़ा है, एक ्भी आदमी पक्ड़ा नहीं ग्या है। अगर पक्ड़ा ग्या है, तो ्बताइ्ये?

श्री मणि ्शंकर अ्य्यर : माननी्य मान्वेन्द्र ्सिंह जी, होटल ्वालों, ढा्बे ्वालों का हम कुछ नहीं कर ्सकते। ्यह हमारे अधिकार-क्षेत्र में नहीं आता है, ्यह राज्य ्सरकारों का काम है। हम ्भी जो निरीक्षण करने के लिए रे्ड़ करते हैं, उ्से ्बढ़ाएंगे। लेकिन हमें देखना प्ड़ता है कि मार्किटिंग डि्सिप्लिन गाइड-लाइन्स में जो नि्यम दि्ये ग्ये हैं, उनके अनुसार ही हम कार््वाई कर ्सकते हैं। हम जो कार््वाई करते हैं, उ्समें खतरा ्बहुत रहता है और खतरे ्से हमें ्बचाने के लिए राज्य ्सरकारें हमारा ्साथ दें और हमारे इंस्पेक्टरों के ्साथ ्सुरक्षा-्बल उन्हें उपल्ब्ध कराने चाहिए। जि्स प्रकार का ्वाक्या अ्भी हाल में हुआ, माननी्य गंग्वार जी के क्षेत्र के नजदीक हुआ, तो ऐ्सी जगहों पर ्बहुत आ्व्श्यक है कि राज्य ्सरकारों की तरफ ्से ्सुरक्षा-्बल उपल्ब्ध कराए जाएं। हमने ्सेंट्रल इंडस्ट्रि्यल ्सिक्योरिटी फो्र्स के ्बारे में कहा है कि थो्ड़ी-्बहुत उनकी तरफ ्से ्भी हमें मदद मिले तो अच्छा होगा। लेकिन जि्स ्बिंदु पर ्बहुत जोर लगा्या ग्या है ्वह ्यह है कि हमारी राज्य ्सरकारों को इ्स ्बारे में ्बहुत ध्यान देना चाहिए और अगर ्वे ज्यादा ध्यान दें त्भी ्संभ्व है कि थो्ड़ा ्बहुत हम इ्स डा्य्व्र्सन को कम कर पाएं।

SHRI SURESH KURUP : Sir, I would like to know, what action the oil companies are taking against the distributors who are indulging in these activities?

SHRI MANI SHANKAR AIYAR: Sir, may I clarify for the fourth time this afternoon that action by oil companies against the distributors is taken in terms of the provisions of the Distributorship Agreement as well as the Marketing Discipline Guidelines which we revise from time to time taking into account recent developments.

Now, there has been considerable resistance from the officers and officials of the oil sector to the increasingly stringent nature of the Marketing Discipline Guidelines. We do our best but what we do will only be a drop in the ocean. The work of the State Governments in this regard has to substantially improve, or alternatively, the wide and growing gap between the domestic LPG prices and the commercial LPG prices has to be reduced.

SHRI BASU DEB ACHARIA : Can the Government not cancel the licenses of the distributors?

SHRI MANI SHANKAR AIYAR: Under the Marketing Discipline Guidelines there are provisions with regard to this and we have been cancelling certain distributorships.

Sir, it has been asked of me by Shri Sudhangsu Seal as to why there is less weight of the cylinders. Here again, the Weights and Measures Department of the State Governments comes into play and since Shri Seal comes from the state of West Bengal I want to draw his attention to the fact that the State Government of Delhi undertook raids at the end of September which is what resulted in strikes in LPG bottling plants on 29th September.

So, it is for the State Government of West Bengal to take appropriate measures to see that weights and measures are duly respected and we are trying to do what we can on our part.

What we are also hoping to do is to perhaps have a different colour for the domestic LPG cylinder than the colour which we would have for the commercial use so that if a cylinder with the colour for domestic use is found in a commercial

establishment, it becomes easy to detect. But, at the same time, the cost of converting the colour from one to the other is not very great. So, we are looking into this aspect carefully to see whether there are administrative measures possible. But I do wish to stress that so long as economic forces operate in the direction of encouraging this diversion, it is going to be very difficult for us to really control it effectively and fully.

अ्भी योगी जी ने पता नहीं क्यों कहा था कि राधा और कृ्ण की आ्वाज को आप ्बंद करें। ्साथ ही ्योगी जी ने ्बीच में ्यह ्भी कहा कि ्वे जानना चाहते हैं कि हमारे दे्श में जो ्सब्सिडी दी जा रही है, ्वह तेल कंपनि्यों पर क्यों थोपी जा रही है? इ्सका ज्वा्ब ्यह है कि ज्ब आप इधर ्बैठते थे और मैं उधर ्बैठता था, त्ब आपने ्यह दुर्व्यवहार शुरू कि्या था, ्वह लगातार ्बढ़ता ग्या है, क्योंकि ्सब्सिडी का जो ्बोझ है ्वह हमारी तेल कंपनि्यों पर लगाने की देन माननी्य श्री रामनाइक जी की है, इ्सलिए मैं उनका ्बहुत अ्भारी हूं कि उन्होंने मुझे रा्स्ता दिखाने के लिए दर्वाजा खोला और जि्सके जरिए ्बोझ ्बढ़ता जा रहा है। ्यह ्बोझ क्यों ्बढ़ रहा है? मैं इ्स पर ्भी रो्शनी डालना चाहता हूं।

श्री ्संतो्ा गंग्वार : आप अ्सत्य ्बोल रहे हैं। आपकी जानकारी पुरानी है कि कि्स ढंग ्से प्रक्रि्या चल रही है? हम आप्से ्वा्स्त्विक ज्वा्ब चाहते हैं कि ्सम्स्या का हल कै्से होगा? अगर आप चाहें तो ्सदन में चर्चा करा लीजिए। हमें आपका आधा घंटा लं्बा ्भा्ण नहीं ्सुनना है। हम जानना चाहते हैं कि इ्स ्सम्स्या को आप कि्स दिन हल करेंगे?

श्री मणि ्शंकर अ्य्यर : अगर आपको ्भा्ण नहीं ्सुनना है, तो मेरे ख्याल ्से काफी और चा्य ्बाहर उपल्ब्ध है। ्यह ्बह्स मेरे और आप के ्बीच की नहीं है। ्यह ्बह्स मेरे और उन माननी्य ्सद्स्यों के ्बीच है, जिन्होंने ्ये वि्य उठा्ये हैं और मुझे लगता है कि मेरा कर्तव्य ्बनता है कि मैं पूरी जानकारी दूं कि आप के जमाने में ज्ब आप दो ्श्ब्द कहकर ्भाग जाते थे, ्वह दौर खत्म हो ग्या है और न्या दौर शुरू हो ग्या है â€¦ (व्यवधान) मैं कह रहा था कि जो ्सब्सिडी दी जा रही है और ज्ब पिछली ्बार हमने पेट्रोल और डीजल के दाम थो्ड़े-्बहुत ्बढ़ाए, उ्स ्समय मैंने कहा था कि जो ्बोझ ्बढ़ा है, उ्सका 51 प्रति्शत ्भार तेल कंपनि्यों के कंधों पर आ रहा है, 36 प्रति्शत ्सरकार पर और मात्र 13 प्रति्शत ्बोझ हम उप्भोक्ताओं पर थोप रहे हैं। ्यदि आप चाहते हैं कि ्यह फाइनें्सि्यल ्बजट पर आए, तो आप ज्रूर

कहिएगा, लेकिन मुझे लगता है कि उस्से इस देश में विकास के लिए जो धन है, वह बहुत कम हो जाएगा। मैंने आचार्य जी के डॉय्वर्जन और एक्सप्रेशंस के संबंध में कह दिया है और मूवीज के संबंध में राधाकृणन जी को बता दिया है, जो आम तौर पर स्वाल करके उठकर चले जाते हैं।

श्री रूपचन्द पाल : आपने आर्डर के बारे में कुछ नहीं बताया। आपने आर्डर दिया था कि न्या कनेक्शन नहीं देंगे, उसकी वजह से पब्लिक सैक्टर को जो लॉस हो रहा है, उसके बारे में क्या कहना चाहते हैं?

उपाध्यक्ष महोदय : आप कितना समय और लेंगे, मेरे पास अभी बहुत बिजनेस शेा है।

श्री मणि शंकर अय्यर : यदि आप का कहना है, तो मैं 5 मिनट में अपनी बात को समाप्त करता हूं।

प्रो. महादेवराव शिवनकर : मैं जानना चाहता हूं कि क्या एक दिसंबर से नए कनेक्शन मिलेंगे? यह स्थिति कितने दिनों में सुधरेगी?

मंत्री जी साफ-साफ बताएं कि स्थिति कितने दिनों में सुधरेगी?

श्री मणिशंकर अय्यरः मैं पूरी जिम्मेदारी के साथ सदन को बताना चाहता हूं कि भारत सरकार की तरफ से और मेरे मंत्रालय की तरफ से कभी भी कोई ऐसा निर्देश नहीं निकाला गया कि नए कनैक्शन नहीं दिए जाएं। â€¦ (व्यवधान) मेरी बात सुन लो। जरा सब्र करो। आप स्वामी जी हैं। हमें आपसे सब्र करना सीखना चाहिए। â€¦ (व्यवधान)

I wish to make it completely clear that there have been no instructions or directions from the Government. But, the fact of the matter is that when severe shortages developed from the month of September and when it was not possible for the oil companies to meet the demand of existing customers, it did make sense for them to not compound their problems by allowing additional connections. ...(*Interruptions*) I object to Shri Santosh Gangwar interrupting me. ...(*Interruptions*)

श्री संतोा गंग्वार : उपाध्यक्ष महोदय, मंत्री जी ठीक से ज्वाब नहीं दे रहे हैं। â€¦ (व्यवधान)

श्री मणिशंकर अय्यरः ज्ब हम यहां बैठते थे तो हम इस तरह टोकते नहीं थे। â€¦ (व्यवधान) आप बाहर जाइए और चाय-कॉफी पीजिए। â€¦ (व्यवधान)

योगी आदित्यनाथ : उपाध्यक्ष महोदय, जनता की समस्याओं की अनदेखी की जा रही है इसलिए हम इसका विरोध करते हैं और सदन से वाकआउट करते हैं।

15.27 hrs.

(Shri Yogi Adityanath and some other hon. Members

then left the House)

SHRI MANI SHANKAR AIYAR: For the benefit of those Members who have chosen to remain here, I wish to give the clarification that in the last quarter of the NDA regime, there was such a total misuse of domestic LPG connections that in a single quarter the rate of growth of consumption rose by 18.8 per cent. I cannot believe that this has nothing to do with the BJP's connections with those who were making the diversions. It is because we spotted that there was a lot of diversion to non-domestic uses taking place, we insisted that our Oil Marketing Companies to observe the customer strength of their respective distributors. In accordance with that, we have succeeded in limiting the amount of gas that is made available to any given distributor to approximately the number of its customers' strength.

In regard to new connections, because the situation has improved and the issue was raised in the Consultative Committee, with the permission of the hon. Members present in the Consultative Committee, I did something that I was not supposed to do. I directed the OMCs to start giving new connections from the 1st of December. They agreed with my request on the spot. This is what is stated in the statement that has been circulated. ...(*Interruptions*) Please allow a little more time for the backlog to get cleared. I would say that with effect from the 1st of January, if you find any distributor not meeting the requirement of new connections, do let me know or do let the Territory Manager of the Company know. We will try to sort it out. ...(*Interruptions*) Please do not allow such rumours to unnecessarily circulate in the market. Thank you very much.

15.29 hrs.